

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 027687

FOLLOWING REPEAT LIMA 913 ACTION SECSTATE 4 FEBRUARY.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 0913

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, PE

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - CONSULTATIONS

REF: LIMA 0911

1. IT NOW SEEMS CLEAR THAT GOP HAS DECIDED TO TAKE
HARD LINE AND THAT IT PRESENTLY INTENDS TO MAKE NO
EFFORT TO REACH A COMPROMISE WITH BRANIFF. IF SOTO'S
STATEMENT TO PRESS (LIMA 0879) AND OTHER PRESS COVER-
AGE ARE ANY INDICATION, GOP WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE POSITION
THAT BRANIFF HAS FINALLY ACCEPTED THE LOGIC OF GOP
REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL AIR POLICY AND HAS AGREED TO OPER-
ATE NEW, RESTRICTIVE SCHEDULE WHICH WILL, AS SOON AS
AEROPERU ACQUIRES MORE EQUIPMENT, RESULT IN COMPLETE
PARITY BETWEEN THE TWO AIRLINES.

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2. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, EMBASSY AND BRANIFF AGREE THAT USG SHOULD NOW PROCEED WITH SUSPENSION ACTION AGAINST AEROPERU AS RECOMMENDED BY USDEL CHAIRMAN STYLES. ON RECEIPT OF AUTHORIZATION, ECONOMIC COUNSELOR IN CAPACITY AS MEMBER CIVAIR DELEGATION WOULD INFORM DGTA BERCKEMEYER ACCORDINGLY. IN ADDITION, PRESS RELEASE (SUGGESTED TEXT OF WHICH NOW IN PREPARATION) SHOULD BE ISSUED TO CORRECT ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION CONVEYED BY PERUVIAN PRESS. EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS PRESS RELEASE WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE IF IT EMANATED FROM WASHINGTON AND WOULD BE SIMULTANEOUSLY RELEASED HERE. AMBASSADOR WOULD ALSO PLAN TO CALL ON NEW PRIME MINISTER MORALES BERMUDEZ TO ACQUAINT HIM WITH FACTS OF MATTER AND REQUEST HIS INTERVENTION.

3. EMBASSY AGAIN ASKS THAT DEPARTMENT AT MOST SENIOR LEVEL REVIEW THE FOREGOING ACTION, WHICH IF TAKEN WILL PREDICTABLY RESULT IN CONSIDERABLE ESCALATION OF U.S./PERUVIAN DIFFERENCES. AT THE MINIMUM, LOCAL PRESS TREATMENT TO DATE PROVIDES BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH GOP CAN CHARGE U.S. WITH TAKING CAPRICIOUS, HOSTILE ACT AFTER AN EQUITABLE ARRANGEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED AND IN KEEPING WITH WHICH U.S. CARRIER HAD TACITLY AGREED TO OPERATE. WE CAN EXPECT PERU TO CHARGE U.S. WITH ECONOMIC COERCION AND TO ATTEMPT TO LINE UP OTHER LATIN NATIONS IN SUPPORT. AFTER WHAT AIR MINISTER GILARDI AND PRESIDENT VELASCO HAVE STATED PUBLICLY, IT SEEMS CERTAIN THAT GOP WILL RETALIATE BY SHUTTING DOWN BRANIFF AND BARRING OTHER U.S. CARRIERS, AND POSSIBLY EVEN U.S. MILITARY FLIGHTS, FROM PERU. PERUVIAN REACTION MIGHT EVEN GO BEYOND CIVIL AIR-RELATED ISSUES, CONCEIVABLY EVEN TO A BREAK IN RELATIONS (JUST AS PERU BROKE RELATIONS WITH FRANCE FOLLOWING CONTINUED FRENCH ATMOSPHERIC NUCLEAR TESTS).

4. HOWEVER, FOR REASONS SET FORTH IN LIMA 10901, WHICH WE HAVE AGAIN REVIEWED, WE BELIEVE THAT SITUATION LEAVES US NO ALTERNATIVE. BRANIFF HAS AGAIN ASSURED US THAT IT CANNOT FEASIBLY OPERATE UNDER THE IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS. RESTRICTIONS MOREOVER ARE IN VIOLATION OF CIVIL AIR BILATERAL AND CONFLICT WITH GENERAL U.S. CIVIL AIR CONFIDENTIAL

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POLICY, WE CAN HOPE AT LEAST THAT PRESIDENT VELASCO AND HIS SENIOR ADVISORS WILL CHANGE THEIR PRESENT COURSE, BASED ON THE PROPOSED USG PRESS RELEASE AND THE AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH PRIMIN MORALES BERMUDEZ. IF GOP CANNOT SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO BRANIFF'S COMPLIANCE WITH NEW RESTRICTED OPERATING PERMIT, THEN WE ARE INDEED ON A COLLISION COURSE LEADING INEVITABLY TO SUSPENSION OF BRANIFF AND

AEROPERU SERVICES. DEAN UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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